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ABSTRACT

In this follow-up study, information was obtained regarding the educational and employment patterns of students who withdrew from Bucks County Community College, their reasons for withdrawing, and their evaluation of the college's programs and services. The questionnaire used (a copy of which is provided in an appendix) was similar to the one used in the Follow-up Study of Bucks County Community College Graduates 1965-1972 (see JC 730 250), allowing responses to certain items to be compared and contrasted. A 50% sample of the non-academic attrition students (1,206) received the questionnaire, of which, 655 (54%) responded. Comparisons on the basis of sex, age, curriculum enrolled in, and credits completed indicated that the respondents were fairly representative of the total universive of non-academic attrition students from 1965 to 1972 at the college. Less than one-half (48%) of the respondents entered the college directly after high school; 22% enrolled after working for a period of time; and 9% transferred to the college from a four-year college or university. The remaining students were either in military service or served in some other capacity prior to enrolling. Two-fifths of the respondents were employed at least 21 hours/week while enrolled at the college; another 28% worked between 11 to 20 hours/week; 63% attended college full time and 13% alternated between full and part-time. The primary reason for withdrawal from the college was employment, and the second major reason was to transfer to another college. Slightly over 45% continued their education immediately upon wirthdrwing from the college, and 47% were employed. (Author/DB)

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Office of Institutional Research
BUCKS COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

FOLLOW-UP STUDY

NON-ACADEMIC ATTRITION

AT

BUCKS COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

1965 - 1972

Newtown, Pennsylvania 18940

August, 1973

JC 730 251

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FOREWORD

Since its initial enrollment of students in September, 1965, 2151 students had earned an associate degree at Bucks County Community College by September, 1972. During that same time period, an additional 2664 students had completed at least 12 credits of academic work with a grade point average of 2.00 or better but withdrew from the College prior to graduation. It is the latter group to which we are directing this study.

This Follow-Up Study of Non-Academic Attrition at Bucks County Community College from 1965 to 1972 was conducted by the President's Office throughout the Fall of 1972 and the Spring of 1973. It was undertaken in recognition of the responsibility of this College to obtain information regarding what happened to former students who, although not graduating from the College, have indicated some success with its academic programs. A second purpose was to provide former students with an opportunity to evaluate the College's programs and services.

This study would not have been possible without the complete cooperation of staff and faculty personnel who supported the development of this follow-up. Special appreciation is expressed to Mrs. Kathy Bogdziewicz for mailing and coding the questionnaires and Miss Nancy Fletcher for the typing of this final report.

Too often colleges have confined their follow-ups and student evaluations to their graduates. It is the intent of Bucks County Community College to gain feedback from a much wider base.

Jack Mahon
Assistant to the President

INTRODUCTION

Bucks County Community College was founded in 1964 in order to provide a low cost, open-door, and accessible institution of higher education for all adult residents of Bucks County. Since its founding this College has witnessed constant growth in enrollment from 731 students in 1965 to over 5,600 students by the Fall, 1972. It is estimated that close to 20,000 Bucks County residents have enrolled in the College during those eight years.

While 2151 students have graduated from the College between September, 1965 and August, 1972, another 2664 students earned at least 12 credits of academic work with a grade point average of 2.00 or better but withdrew from the College prior to graduation.

Since this group did not graduate from the College, some might indicate a failure on the behalf of the institution even though these students were academically successful. Others might make reference to the variety of reasons students attend community colleges - to take a course for personal enrichment, to develop a particular career, to transfer to a four year college or to make better use of one's leisure time - none of which necessarily mandate the reception of a degree.

It was the intent of this study to provide the College's offices and departments with information on the educational and career endeavors of these former students.

Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this follow-up was to provide descriptive information concerning the educational and employment patterns of these former students of Bucks County Community College. In addition, this study elicited evaluative reactions from these students in order to improve the academic, administrative and student

personnel services.

Specifically, this follow-up study sought reliable information which could be used for the following:

1. to determine why these students withdrew from Bucks County Community College
2. to determine how effectively the College is meeting the educational and career needs of its students
3. to provide current information on the educational and employment patterns of former students
4. to provide feedback from former students on how the Bucks County Community College experience could be improved

Procedure

The questionnaire (Appendix A) was developed in 1972. It was field tested using college employees who had previously been enrolled in one of the College's programs.

The Computer Center provided a list of the 2664 students who had completed at least 12 credits of work with at least a 2.00 grade average and had withdrawn from the College prior to graduation. In order to facilitate matters, it was decided to take a 50 per cent sample of this population. The sample was achieved by using every other student on the initial listing. Mailing labels for this sample of 1332 students were provided by the Computer Center.

Each student was contacted twice by mail. The first questionnaire with a covering letter (Appendix B) was sent in mid-December, 1972, requesting a return in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope. During the last week of January, 1973, a second questionnaire with a second covering letter (Appendix C) was sent to those persons who had not yet responded.

The analysis of the data was accomplished by Bill Reed of the Computer Center

and consisted of item tallies for the total sample on the entire questionnaire.

Questionnaire Return Information

There were 2664 students who attended Bucks County Community College between September, 1965, and August, 1972, who completed at least 12 credits of work with at least a 2.00 grade point average but withdrew from the College prior to graduation. A sample of 50 per cent were contacted by mail but 126 envelopes were returned because of incorrect address. Of the remaining 1206 former students who received their survey questionnaire, replies were received from 656 or 54 per cent.

A comparison on four separate items indicated that those responding were fairly representative of the entire universe of 2664 students. The universe (N=2664) were 57 per cent male and 43 per cent female whereas the respondents were 55 per cent male and 45 per cent female. In a similar fashion 19 per cent of the universe are under 20 years of age and 65 per cent are between 20 and 30 years of age compared respectively with 21 per cent and 65 per cent of the respondents. Likewise there were similar proportions between the universe and the respondents regarding the number of credits completed at Bucks County Community College. (See Table I)

TABLE I

Credits Completed at Bucks County Community College

Credits Completed	Universe	Respondents
11 - 20	27%	26%
21 - 30	18%	16%
31 - 40	13%	17%
41 - 50	10%	10%
51 and over	32%	31%

A final item of comparison, curriculums enrolled in, indicated considerable similarity between the universe and the respondents. Thus, although the sample was not selected with representativeness in mind, the 656 respondents were somewhat representative of the universe.

The results indicated in the following pages were gained from these 656 replies.

RESULTS

Student Characteristics

A comprehensive community college, by definition, will provide legitimate educational experiences for the entire adult population within its service area. Although Bucks County Community College was initially established to meet the immediate post-high school needs of Bucks County youth, there is evidence in this study to indicate that a much wider based population is attending the College. First, there was considerable variance in the ages of the students. Although 21 per cent are under 20 years of age and 65 per cent are between 20 and 30 years of age, 8 per cent are between 31 and 40 years old and another 6 per cent are 41 years of age or older. This indicates more than just the traditional college age clientele. Second, there was every indication that the students were entering the College from a variety of backgrounds. (See Table II)

TABLE II

Status Upon Entering Bucks County Community College

STATUS	PER CENT
Entered directly from high school	48%
Entered shortly after military service	7%
Entered after working for less than three years	10%
Entered after working three years or more	12%
Transferred from another two-year college	1%
Transferred from a four-year institution	9%
Other	13%

Less than one half (48 per cent) of these students entered Bucks County Community College directly after high school. Seven per cent enrolled shortly after serving

their military obligation. A surprisingly high figure of 22 per cent enrolled after working for a period of time. Another surprisingly high figure indicated that 9 per cent transferred from a four-year college or university, thus indicating a continuation of the reverse transfer trend. As one of these respondents indicated:

> *"I have attended three colleges, two were four year institutions and then Bucks. In my opinion, BCCC is an excellent school in terms of teacher-pupil relationships. The teachers that I knew were always quite willing to help with any type of a problem whether it be academic or personal. This is something that I haven't found in the other colleges."*

The majority of those indicating "other" were either housewives who enrolled at the College to start their "second career" or individuals who had traveled for a year or two after completing high school.

Not only must a community college be viewed as accessible and desirable for people of different ages and backgrounds, it must also provide enough flexibility in its programs and course offerings to maintain their interest. One example of the flexibility required can be seen from the employment patterns of our students. (See Table III) While 23 per cent of these students did not work at all during their enrollment, 27 per cent worked over 30 hours every week. Another 29 per cent worked between 16 and 30 hours every week.

TABLE III

Employment Patterns of Bucks County Community College

EMPLOYMENT PATTERNS	PER CENT
Did not work	23%
Less than 6 hours	2%
6 - 10 hours	7%
11 - 15 hours	12%
16 - 20 hours	16%
21 - 25 hours	8%
26 - 30 hours	5%
Over 30 hours	27%

Primarily resulting from these employment patterns, the respondents indicated considerable divergence both in their enrollment status while attending Bucks County Community College as well as in the number of semesters they were enrolled. While 58 per cent were enrolled on a full-time and 5 per cent were enrolled on a part-time basis during the day, another 4 per cent attended on a full-time basis and 20 per cent attended on a part-time basis at night. The remaining 13 per cent alternated their enrollment status between full-time and part-time. The number of semesters these students attended indicated no consistent pattern. Although the 26 per cent attending for two semesters and the 31 per cent attending for four semesters may indicate the points at which these students transferred to a four-year institution, 7 per cent attended only one semester, 17 per cent attended three semesters and 19 per cent attended five or more semesters.

The respondents also indicated a considerable spread in the numbers of credits completed prior to withdrawing. (See Table IV)

TABLE IV

Credits Completed at Bucks County Community College

CREDITS COMPLETED	PER CENT
12 - 20	26%
21 - 30	16%
31 - 40	17%
41 - 50	10%
51 plus	31%

A final item that related to their enrollment at Bucks County Community College regarded the number of times they switched academic majors. The vast majority (77 per cent) never changed their major once enrolled. Another 20 per cent changed it once and 3 per cent changed it at least twice.

Reasons for Withdrawal

One of the major reasons for undertaking this study was to determine why students who were doing academically well decided to withdraw from Bucks County Community College. The respondents were asked to list the three most important factors in their leaving the College in their order of importance. These responses were coded and combined and the top ten are listed in Table V.

TABLE V

Reasons for Withdrawing from Bucks County Community College

REASON	PER CENT
Employment	34%
To attend another college	17%
Completed my objectives	12%
Courses were inadequate	8%
Lack of financing	5%
To get away from home	4%
Lack of interest	3%
Moved from BCCC area	3%
Inadequate achievement	3%
Too far to drive	3%

Many of those who replied that they withdrew from Bucks County Community College due to employment were individuals who either had just gotten married and needed full-time employment; or had encountered some situation that required additional income; or had indicated that they wanted to try the world of work and earn some money. The vast majority of those who indicated that they left Bucks County Community College "to attend another college" and found the "courses

were inadequate" were seeking the bachelor's degree. Typical of the replies to this question were the following:

> *"Had BCCC been a four year school, I would have stayed - the opportunity to have a close student-teacher relationship with my instructors was invaluable and something I missed at the school I transferred to."*
>
> *OR*
>
> *"I hope someday BCCC will become a full four year institution."*

Post-Withdrawal Patterns

The value of an institution of higher education is partially judged by the success of its graduates in further formal education or in maintaining a gainful employment record. In the case of a community college, however, one needs to extend these analyses to its non-graduates since the institution is defined as meeting a variety of retraining and career needs that do not necessarily require the reception of an associate degree.

As indicated in Table VI the two major subgroups of non-academic attrition students upon withdrawing from Bucks County Community College were those who continued as full-time students in a four-year college or university and those employed full-time. These two groups accounted for 71 per cent of the respondents. The remaining respondents divided themselves rather evenly among various combinations of employment, student, military and housewife duties.

TABLE VI

Status Immediately after Withdrawing from Bucks County Community College

STATUS	PER CENT
Military Service	4%
Employed full-time	35%
Employed part-time	4%
Employed full-time/Student part-time	6%
Employed part-time/Student part-time	2%
Student full-time	36%
Student part-time	1%
Housewife	4%
Other	8%

The most noticeable changes between their status immediately after withdrawing from the College and their current status (See Table VII) were in the areas of "employed full-time" and "student full-time". The "employed full-time" increased from 35 per cent to 44 per cent while the "student full-time" decreased from 36 per cent to 25 per cent. The other items remained relatively constant.

TABLE VII

Current Status of Respondents

STATUS	PER CENT
Military Service	3%
Employed full-time	44%
Employed part-time	3%
Employed full-time/Student part-time	6%
Employed part-time/Student part-time	1%
Student full-time	25%
Student part-time	1%
Housewife	7%
Other	9%

Educational Endeavors of Respondents

The vast majority of those students who transferred to another educational institution upon withdrawing from Bucks County Community College did enroll at a four-year college or university. The remaining students enrolled in either employer training programs, trade or business schools or another community or junior college. Of those who transferred to a four-year college or university, 30 per cent have received a bachelor's degree while another 58 per cent are currently enrolled in a baccularеate degree program. The remaining 12 per cent have neither received a bachelor's degree nor are currently enrolled in a college or university.

When questioned whether or not they experienced any difficulties in transferring, 84 per cent replied no and 16 per cent replied yes. As in the case of Bucks County Community College graduates most of the problems incurred involved the acceptance of all of the credits earned at Bucks County Community College. Increased articulation between Bucks County Community College and many four year colleges and universities has improved this situation considerably in the past few years. Most of these agreements, however, involve only those students who complete the associate degree and thus those who wish to transfer prior to the reception of this degree may well continue to lose some credits in the future.

The former students also indicated that their education at Bucks County Community College had given them a good background for these educational efforts (See Table VIII). Over 90 per cent found Bucks County Community College to be at least fair in each of the areas studied. As one former student replied:

> *"BCCC gave me my start in life. I didn't have the grades to go to a four year university so I went to BCCC. BCCC gave me the self-confidence and desire to make something of myself. Keep up the good work."*

TABLE VIII

Evaluation of Education at Bucks County Community College in Terms of Preparation for Further Educational Efforts

AREA	SUPERIOR	GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Technical Knowledge	22%	51%	21%	6%
Learning Skills	26%	57%	14%	3%
Interpersonal Relations	27%	51%	17%	4%
Self-understanding	27%	57%	13%	3%
Self-confidence	31%	54%	13%	2%

Another item of some significance is the fact that 12 per cent of those who continued their formal education since withdrawing from Bucks County Community

College have enrolled in graduate study. Initial enrollment at a community college obviously does not preclude an individual from pursuing graduate work.

The intent of the respondents to continue their formal education is well documented. Responses to the survey indicated that 85 per cent of the former students plan to continue their education at either the undergraduate or graduate level, over one-fourth of whom plan to continue their education at Bucks County Community College. The "stop-in" and "stop-out" syndrome is quite apparent. As one respondent indicated:

> *"While attending BCCC I was very much impressed with the academic atmosphere and the excellent student life in general. I hope to continue my education at BCCC upon my discharge from the Air Force."*

Employment Endeavors of Respondents

Approximately one-half (47 per cent) of those students who withdrew went immediately into either full-time or part-time employment. Although many consider the job market to be very tight today, 97 per cent of those seeking employment indicated that they did not encounter any problems in securing a position.

A comparison between their starting annual salary ranges and their current annual salary ranges provides some evidence of the ability of these individuals to advance in their chosen career. As indicated in Table IX, there have been recognizable increases in the salary ranges for many of the respondents. Although one cannot consider a salary to be the exclusive determinant of either an individual's success or happiness with a given position, it provides a reliable indicator of a person's value in his or her employer's eyes.

TABLE IX

Annual Salary Ranges of Respondents

SALARY RANGES	STARTING	CURRENT
0 - 5,999	55%	39%
6,000 - 7,999	25%	21%
8,000 - 9,999	12%	17%
10,000 - 11,999	4%	11%
12,000 or more	4%	12%

Replies to the survey also indicated a certain degree of success in terms of how well the educational programs at Bucks County Community College prepared the respondents for their present job. Over 70 per cent found the preparation at Bucks County Community College to be at least fair in terms of "technical knowledge" and "job skills". Over 90 per cent of the respondents stated that the education at Bucks County Community College to be at least fair in terms of "interpersonal relations", "self-understanding", and "self-confidence."

While Bucks County Community College has an initial responsibility to assist its students in finding suitable employment, the College is also concerned with the degree of satisfaction these individuals find in their various working capacities. As indicated in Table X, most of the former students are fairly well satisfied with their current positions. Over 90 per cent of those responding indicated that, overall, they felt at least fair regarding their positions.

TABLE X

Degree of Satisfaction with Current Position

ASPECT	SUPERIOR	GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Challenging Work	34%	36%	19%	11%
Interesting Work	36%	38%	16%	10%
Good Relations with Colleagues	46%	46%	7%	1%
Opportunity for Advancement	22%	30%	26%	22%
Salary	13%	42%	29%	16%
Overall	18%	52%	24%	6%

Evaluation of College Experience

One of the primary purposes of this study was to provide feedback to college personnel regarding the variety of counseling sources available at Bucks County Community College. In this way these individuals or offices might have the chance to see themselves through the eyes of their clients. As indicated in Table XI, the most frequently utilized sources of counseling (as determined by the lower percentages in the "cannot rate" column) were the Admissions Office and the Academic Advisors. Less than one-half of the respondents indicated any utilization of either the Placement Office or the Counseling Center Staff and only 31 per cent indicated any utilization of the Financial Aid Office.

TABLE XI

Evaluation of Sources of Counseling Utilized
by
Respondents at Bucks County Community College

SOURCE	SUPERIOR	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	CANNOT RATE
Placement Office	7%	23%	10%	4%	56%
Admissions Office	19%	41%	13%	4%	23%
Counseling Center Staff	11%	21%	10%	5%	53%
Financial Aid Office	7%	14%	6%	4%	69%
Academic Advisors	16%	33%	14%	11%	26%

The opportunity for involvement in student activities was found to be good or excellent by over one-half of the respondents with an additional 17 per cent indicating that they had no interest in this area. In addition, over four-fifths (82 per cent) of the respondents found their program of study at Bucks County Community College to be good or excellent in meeting their personal educational objectives and 90 per cent indicated that their program of study at Bucks County Community College was at least fair in meeting their occupational objectives.

This study also indicated that 87 per cent of the respondents would recommend Bucks County Community College to a person seeking to complete the same program that they studied here.

DISCUSSION

A slightly different student body is in evidence among the non-graduates than was found among the graduates in the "Follow-Up Study of Bucks County Community College Graduates -- 1965-1972." Less than one-half (48 per cent) of the non-graduates enrolled at Bucks County Community College directly after high school compared with 68 per cent of the graduates. Twice as many non-graduates (22 per cent) were employed prior to enrolling at Bucks County Community College and almost twice as many non-graduates transferred from a four-year institution to this College. Both the employed student and the four year college transfer student might well have enrolled at the College for legitimate career and educational reasons that did not require the reception of the associate degree. It is quite possible that those employed sought a retraining function from Bucks County Community College and those transferring from a four-year institution sought an opportunity to improve their academic preparation by attending an institution that emphasized the freshman and sophomore years.

A comparison of the employment patterns of these two groups of students while enrolled at Bucks County Community College indicates one very significant difference. While both the non-graduates and the graduates had similar percentages of members not working while enrolled (23 per cent v. 24 per cent) the non-graduates had a much higher percentage working over 30 hours per week, 27 per cent, compared to the graduates 11 per cent. In light of this, the College must continue to offer programs that are of value and accessible to the working person and the recent proposal for a Weekend College would appear to be a step in the right direction.

No differences were found between the non-graduates and the graduates

regarding the number of times each group switched its academic majors.

Since two-fifths of the non-graduates were employed at least 20 hours per week while they were enrolled at the College, it is not surprising to find employment the primary reason for their withdrawal. It is possible that the proposed Weekend College may well provide a partial solution to some of these withdrawals. The second major reason for withdrawing involved the student transferring in order to earn the baccularеate degree. While this reason and other reasons for withdrawing, such as "to get away from home," "moved from the Bucks County Community College area" and "inadequate achievement," are outside of the control of the College, several other reasons, such as "lack of financing," "lack of interest" and "too far to drive", appear to be areas where the College has some control and indeed some responsibility.

A comparison of the post-enrollment patterns of the non-graduates and the graduates produces two salient differences. Over one-half (51 per cent) of the graduates went into full-time study upon graduation compared with only 36 per cent of the non-graduates while 35 per cent of the non-graduates held full-time employment upon withdrawing compared with 29 per cent of the graduates. Both the non-graduates and graduates, however, expressed identical patterns when questioned whether or not they experienced any difficulties in transferring. It appears that in today's competitive market for students the reception of an associate degree is not a *sine qua non* for those seeking to transfer to four year institutions. The non-graduates' replies also indicated a high degree of satisfaction with the educational preparation received at Bucks County Community College for further education.

The success of the non-graduates in securing employment upon withdrawing is well documented. Much of their employability, however, can be attributed to the high percentage holding either full-time or part-time positions while

attending the College. Likewise the noticeable increases in the annual salary ranges as indicated in Table IX can partially be attributed to the ages and prior work experience of the respondents. While it is difficult to measure the exact impact of the educational experiences at Bucks County Community College upon the non-graduates income, it seems quite obvious that it did not do them any harm. The non-graduates, on the whole, appeared to be quite satisfied with both their current positions as well as the preparation they received at Bucks County Community College for their current positions.

The non-graduates and graduates expressed similar ratings when both groups found the Admissions Office and the Academic Advisors as the two most utilized sources of counseling on campus. Part of this rating can be accounted for by the fact that almost all new students have some contact with the Admissions Office and the academic advising process does take place at least once every semester. Although the academic advisors were found to be either superior or good by 49 per cent of the respondents, 11 per cent found them to be poor. It appears that while many advisors were thought of quite highly, others were found to be quite deficient in the counseling capacity. That more than one-half of the non-graduates had no contact with either the Placement Office or the Counseling Center Staff needs further study. Perhaps offering the Comparative Guidance and Placement Program to evening students will provide at least an initial contact for these individuals with the Counseling Center and its services.

The non-graduates indicated a generally favorable reaction to the programs of studies they pursued at Bucks County Community College as seen from the 72 per cent who found their programs of studies to be either good or excellent in meeting their educational objectives and close to two-thirds (63 per cent) who found their academic programs to be either good or excellent in meeting their

occupational objectives. A final indicator of this favorable reaction is the fact that 87 per cent of those responding stated that they would recommend Bucks County Community College to a person seeking to complete the same programs that they studied here.

It was also quite evident from this study that the non-graduates and graduates have similar plans to continue their formal education. In each case 58 per cent of the respondents stated that they intend to continue their education at the undergraduate level and approximately 27 per cent of each group intends to continue formal education at the graduate level. One of the most interesting and important points gained from this question was the fact that 22 per cent of the non-graduates plan to continue their education at Bucks County Community College. This "stop-in" and "stop-out" trend may very well increase in the coming years.

The results of this study do lend support to the contention that Bucks County Community College is serving a variety of functions for the adult citizens of this community. If no other point is made from this study, it should be clear to all that the reception of an associate degree is not the only criterion upon which one should judge either the individual's or the institution's success. If a community college defines itself as meeting a variety of needs, such as retraining, better use of leisure time or even personal enrichment, one must devise appropriate criteria to evaluate both the success and the impact of those efforts. This study indicates that Bucks County Community College is serving those functions and that its salutary impact upon its students is not confined to its graduates alone.

SUMMARY

This study of non-academic attrition of Bucks County Community College students, who were enrolled from 1965 through 1972, was conducted to obtain information regarding their educational and employment patterns since withdrawing from the College, their reasons for withdrawing, and their evaluation of the College's programs and services. Since the questionnaire used in this study was similar to the one used in the "Follow-Up Study of Bucks County Community College Graduates 1965-1972", responses to certain items could be compared and contrasted in an attempt to provide a better picture of the non-academic attrition student at this College.

A 50 per cent sample of the non-academic attrition students was contacted. Of the 1206 former students who received a questionnaire, 656, or 54 per cent, responded. Comparisons on the basis of sex, age, curriculum enrolled in, and credits completed indicated that the respondents to the questionnaire were fairly representative of the total universe of non-academic attrition students at Bucks County Community College from 1965 to 1972.

Less than one-half (48 per cent) of the respondents entered Bucks County Community College directly after high school and another 22 per cent enrolled after working for a period of time. One of the more surprising figures was the fact that 9 per cent transferred to Bucks County Community College from a four-year college or university. The remaining students were either in the military service or served in some other capacity prior to enrolling, such as a housewife or individuals who had traveled upon graduating from high school

Two-fifths of the respondents were employed at least 21 hours every week while enrolled at Bucks County Community College. Another 28 per cent worked

between 11 to 20 hours every week. In spite of these working hours, 63 per cent of the respondents attended Bucks County Community College on a full time basis and another 13 per cent alternated between full and part-time.

The primary reason for withdrawal from the College was employment which usually meant that the individual needed additional income for some reason. The second major reason for withdrawing was to transfer to another college.

Slightly over two-fifths (45 per cent) of those responding continued their formal education immediately upon withdrawing from Bucks County Community College. A slightly higher percentage of respondents (47 per cent) were employed on either a full or a part-time basis. Both those transferring and those seeking employment indicated very few problems in achieving those objectives. Evaluations of the educational programs at Bucks County Community College in terms of preparing individuals for either educational or employment efforts indicated a favorable response.

The Admissions Office and the Academic Advisors were found to be the two most utilized sources of counseling on campus. Other sources of counseling were utilized by less than one-half of the respondents.

There was every indication that most of the respondents (85 per cent) intend to continue their formal education with 22 per cent planning to return to Bucks County Community College.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A study of this nature is of limited value unless it points the way to further research endeavors. In light of some of the findings of this "Follow-Up Study of Non-Academic Attrition at Bucks County Community College," the following recommendations are offered:

1) There exists a recognizable need for the College to explore a variety of work-study options in view of the changing enrollment patterns of its students. While opportunities currently exist within the College that offer some experience in this area, such as the cooperative arrangement between the Medical Secretarial Program and St. Mary's Hospital, expanding this type of opportunity to other career areas can only enhance the preparedness of the students involved and provide them with a much more realistic view of their chosen career. It may also give them a "foot in the door" for future employment.

2) There also appears to be a golden opportunity for the College to explore the retraining needs of many of its former students. The two areas in which both the graduates and the non-graduates found the least satisfaction in their current positions were "opportunity for advancement" and "salary." The proper retraining may well reduce some of this dissatisfaction by opening up advancement opportunities for these people and at the same time providing the employer with a more qualified employee.

3) The fact that 22 per cent of the respondents indicated that they intend to re-enroll at Bucks County Community College lends support to the College's increasing its curricular flexibility. Some of this non-academic attrition can be eliminated. Plans for a "Weekend College" and "Continuous Enrollment"

need to be given serious consideration and other possibilities need to be explored.

4) The nature and utilization of the various counseling services available on this campus need to be studied in depth. It appears from this report that too few students are making contact with those offices that have both the resources and the functional responsibility to assist students in personal, academic and career counseling.

These are the directions presented by this study. As persons connected with the College become acquainted with the study, additional directions should be developed.

APPENDIX A

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

FOLLOW-UP OF FORMER STUDENTS

Please check the appropriate answer.

1. Which best describes your status when you first entered BCCC? 11

1( ) Entered directly from high school
2( ) Entered shortly after military service
3( ) Entered after working for less than three years
4( ) Entered after working three years or more
5( ) Transferred from another two-year college
6( ) Transferred from a four-year institution
7( ) Other (specify):_____

2. How many hours per week did you work while attending BCCC? 12

1( ) Did not work
2( ) Less than 6 hours
3( ) 6-10 hours
4( ) 11-15 hours
5( ) 16-20 hours
6( ) 21-25 hours
7( ) 26-30 hours
8( ) Over 30 hours

3. How many semesters (excluding summer sessions) were your enrolled at BCCC? 13

1( ) One
2( ) Two
3( ) Three
4( ) Four
5( ) Five
6( ) Over five

4. How many credits did you complete at BCCC? 14

1( ) Less than 10
2( ) 11-20
3( ) 21-30
4( ) 31-40
5( ) 41-50
6( ) 51 and over

5. What was your enrollment status while attending BCCC? 15

1( ) Full-time day
2( ) Part-time day
3( ) Full-time evening
4( ) Part-time evening
5( ) Both full and part-time

6. Did you change your major field of study while you were a student at BCCC? 16

1( ) No
2( ) Yes, once
3( ) Yes, twice
4( ) Yes, more than twice

7. Please check the response which indicates what your status was immediately <u>after leaving</u> BCCC: 17

1( ) Military service
2( ) Employed full-time
3( ) Employed part-time
4( ) Employed full-time/Student part-time
5( ) Employed part-time/Student part-time
6( ) Student full-time
7( ) Student part-time
8( ) Housewife
9( ) Other (specify):_____
_____

8. Please check the response which indicates your current status: 18

1( ) In military service
2( ) Employed full-time
3( ) Employed part-time
4( ) Employed full-time/Student part-time
5( ) Employed part-time/Student part-time
6( ) Student full-time
7( ) Student part-time
8( ) Housewife
9( ) Other (specify):_____

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY

If you have been employed on either a full or part-time basis since you left BCCC, please complete items 9-16 and then skip to item 21.

If you have been enrolled as a student on either a full or part-time basis since you left BCCC, please go directly to item 16.

If you have been both employed and enrolled as a student since you left BCCC, please complete all of the remaining items.

If you have not been either employed or enrolled as a student since you left BCCC, please skip to item 21.

9. Who was your first employer after leaving BCCC?

Name: _____
Address: _____
Job Title: _____

10. Did you encounter any problems in securing that position? 19

1( ) No
2( ) Yes; (specify): _____

11. Who is your current employer?

Name: _____
Address: _____
Job Title: _____

12. What was your starting annual salary range? 20

1( ) 0-5,999
2( ) 6,000-7,999
3( ) 8,000- 9,999
4( ) 10,000-11,999
5( ) 12,000 or more

13. What is your current annual salary range? 21

1( ) 0-5,999
2( ) 6,000-7,999
3( ) 8,000- 9,999
4( ) 10,000-11,999
5( ) 12,000 or more

14. How satisfied are you with your current position?
(Rate each category by checking the appropriate box.)

	Superior	Good	Fair	Poor	
Challenging work	1( )	2( )	3( )	4( )	22
Interesting work	1( )	2( )	3( )	4( )	23
Good relations with colleagues	1( )	2( )	3( )	4( )	24
Opportunity for advancement	1( )	2( )	3( )	4( )	25
Salary	1( )	2( )	3( )	4( )	26
Overall	1( )	2( )	3( )	4( )	27

15. Please rate your education at BCCC in terms of how well it prepared you for your present job:

	Superior	Good	Fair	Poor	
Technical knowledge.....	1( )	2( )	3( )	4( )	28
Job skills.....	1( )	2( )	3( )	4( )	29
Interpersonal relations.....	1( )	2( )	3( )	4( )	30
Self-understanding.....	1( )	2( )	3( )	4( )	31
Self-confidence.....	1( )	2( )	3( )	4( )	32

16. Please check the appropriate response to indicate your educational endeavors since leaving BCCC: 33

1( ) Four-year college or university
2( ) Employer training program
3( ) Trade or business school
4( ) Other community/junior college
5( ) Other (specify):_____
6( ) None

17. If you attended or presently attend a four-year college or university, please check the appropriate response and provide the information requested. 34

1( ) Received a bachelor's degree
Date: _____ Degree:_____ Major:_____ 35
Institution:_____ 36

2( ) Currently enrolled for a bachelor's degree 37
Institution:_____ 38
Major: _____

3( ) Not currently enrolled in a baccularеate program but was previously: 39
Institution:_____ 40
Major: _____

18. Please rate your education at BCCC in terms of how well it prepared you for these educational efforts:

	Superior	Good	Fair	Poor	
Technical knowledge.....	1( )	2( )	3( )	4( )	41
Learning skills.....	1( )	2( )	3( )	4( )	42
Interpersonal relations.....	1( )	2( )	3( )	4( )	43
Self-understanding.....	1( )	2( )	3( )	4( )	44
Self-confidence.....	1( )	2( )	3( )	4( )	45

19. Did you experience any difficulties in transferring? 46

1( ) No
2( ) Yes; (specify): _____

20. Have you ever enrolled in graduate study? 47

1( ) No
2( ) Yes

21. Students discontinue attendance at BCCC for a variety of reasons. Please list the three most important factors in your leaving BCCC in their order of importance: 48 49 50

1. _____ 51 52
2. _____ 53
3. _____

22. Please rate the following sources of counseling that were used by you at BCCC:

	Superior	Good	Fair	Poor	Cannot Rate	
Placement Office.....	1( )	2( )	3( )	4( )	5( )	54
Admissions Office.....	1( )	2( )	3( )	4( )	5( )	55
Counseling Center Staff.....	1( )	2( )	3( )	4( )	5( )	56
Financial Aid Office.....	1( )	2( )	3( )	4( )	5( )	57
Academic Advisors.....	1( )	2( )	3( )	4( )	5( )	58
Other (specify):.....						
_____	1( )	2( )	3( )	4( )	5( )	59

23. How would you rate the opportunity for involvement in student activities at BCCC? 60

1( ) Excellent 2( ) Good 3( ) Fair 4( ) Poor 5( ) No Interest

24. How well did your program of study at BCCC meet your educational objectives? 61

1( ) Excellent 2( ) Good 3( ) Fair 4( ) Poor

25. How well did your program of study at BCCC meet your occupational objectives? 62

1( ) Excellent 2( ) Good 3( ) Fair 4( ) Poor

26. Would you recommend BCCC to a person seeking to complete the same program that you studied here? 63

1( ) No
2( ) Yes

27. Do you plan to continue your education? 64

1( ) Yes, at BCCC
2( ) Yes, at the undergraduate level (But not at BCCC)
3( ) Yes, at the graduate level
4( ) No

28. What was your age at your last birthday? 65

1( ) Under 20
2( ) 21-30
3( ) 31-40
4( ) 41-50
5( ) 51-60
6( ) 61 and over

29. Do you have any comments, explanations, or suggestions related to your career preparations or the College in general? (Use space below for answer)

APPENDIX B

FIRST COVERING LETTER

BUCKS COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
NEWTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA 18940

December, 1972

Dear Alumnus:

The Office of Institutional Research is undertaking a study of former students of Bucks County Community College. We believe it is important to know how alumni feel about their experience with the educational programs at Bucks if current practice is to be improved.

I hope that as a former student at Bucks you will be willing to share with us your insight and experience. The enclosed questionnaire should take only about ten minutes of your time. We think you may find it interesting.

Please complete the questionnaire and return it to us in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope. Your responses will be maintained in strict confidence with only group responses being reported. (Note: If the address printed on the label is inaccurate, please correct it in the space provided.)

Your contribution to the success of this study is most important and deeply appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Jack Mahon

JACK MAHON
Administrative Assistant

JM/nf
12/72

APPENDIX C

SECOND COVERING LETTER

BUCKS COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
NEWTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

OFFICE OF
THE PRESIDENT

January, 1973

Dear Alumnus:

Several weeks ago we sent you a questionnaire designed to secure information about your feelings and experiences with the educational programs at Bucks County Community College. Perhaps you meant to respond but have not yet found time. I have enclosed a second copy of the questionnaire in case you misplaced the first.

Completing the questionnaire will take only about ten minutes of your time. We believe it is important to know how alumni feel about their experience at Bucks County Community College if current practice is to be improved. As an alumnus of this institution your experience and insight are invaluable.

Please be assured that your responses will be kept completely confidential. Results will be reported in summary statistics. No individual will be identified in any way.

Your contribution to the success of the study is most important and deeply appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Jack Mahon

JACK MAHON
Administrative Assistant

JM/nf
1/73

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

NOV 21 1973

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGE
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